NEWS

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ILLINOIS TOLLWAY CONTINUES ZERO WEATHER ROAD PATROLS TO PROVIDE HELP ALONG THE WAY INTO THURSDAY

Zero Weather Road Patrols assisted more than 180 motorists since Saturday night

DOWNERS GROVE, IL – The Illinois Tollway continues to provide Zero Weather Road Patrols assistance for drivers during the first deep freeze of January. The Zero Weather Road Patrols are implemented when temperatures or wind chills drop below zero. The Tollway activated its Zero Patrols overnight, Saturday, January 19, and will continue to provide the service into the day Thursday, January 24, until the temperature or wind chill rises above zero.

The 24-hour service dedicates hourly patrols in search of motorists stranded in disabled vehicles or in response to calls that come in to *999 motorist assistance, Illinois Tollway dispatch or Illinois State Police District 15.

"The Illinois Tollway has provided help along the roadway to more than 180 drivers since Saturday during this dangerously cold weather," said Illinois Tollway Executive Director Kristi Lafleur. "We remind our customers that Zero Weather Road Patrols are just a phone call away for drivers who may find themselves stranded on the roadway."

While Tollway Highway Emergency Lane Patrol (H.E.L.P.) trucks run from 4 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday, the Zero Weather Road Patrols work throughout the day and night, including weekends. Cars or trucks with empty fuel tanks, flat tires, batteries needing a boost or overheated radiators are some of the most frequent problems reported among motorists needing help.

There are a minimum of 11 Zero Weather Road Patrols, at least one from each maintenance garage section. The Zero Weather Road Patrols consist of crew cab trucks equipped with arrow boards for directing traffic around accidents or stranded vehicles and enough room to accommodate up to five passengers if motorists need to be transported to a Tollway maintenance garage, toll plaza or Tollway Oasis while service is obtained.

The Tollway offers the following travel tips to keep safe during dangerously cold weather:

- **Be sure your cell phone is fully charged** before heading out.
- **Be sure tires are properly inflated** during cold weather. Tires lose a pound of pressure for every 10 degrees the temperature drops. Check your vehicle owner's manual for recommended tire pressure.
- **Keep your gas tank at least half full** to avoid gas line freeze-up and ensure that you have extra driving time if the weather is unfavorable. Also, consider using winter or synthetic motor oil for colder temperatures, as conventional oils may thicken in colder temperatures. Check your vehicle manufacturer's recommendations for oil that meets colder temperature ranges.
- **Keep a cold weather safety kit** in your car that includes gloves, boots, blankets, road flares, water and a flashlight with fresh batteries. Other items to include: jumper cables,

- more -

first-aid kit, basic tool kit, hot packs, bottled water and non-perishable snacks such as granola or candy bars.

- Stranded motorists should **turn on their emergency lights and remain in their vehicles** until help arrives.
- Cell phone users should **call *999 motorist assistance** for roadway assistance or to report other motorists pulled over on the side of the road. Before calling, motorists should try to note the roadway and direction of travel and nearest milepost or crossroad so the stranded motorist can be quickly located.

Other Tollway Services
The Illinois Tollway's Traffic and Incident Management System (TIMS) provides real-time travel times and roadway conditions via the Illinois Tollway's website, www.illinoistollway.com, and on over-the-road electronic message signs throughout the Tollway.

In addition, the Tollway operates a toll-free telephone line to keep customers up-to-date about weather conditions on its roadways. Customers can call 1-800-TOLL-FYI (1-800-865-5394) to get recorded information that is updated every two hours or as conditions require during winter storms.

Drivers also can sign up for Tollway Tweets at www.twitter.com or from the Tollway's website at www.illinoistollway.com to receive real-time information about roadway incidents, including the type of incident, location and impact on traffic to assist drivers in planning their trips. Tweeters can follow all four Tollway Trips or just the roadways that interest them. The four are Tollway Trip 90, Tollway Trip 94/294, Tollway Trip 88 and Tollway Trip 355.

About the Illinois Tollway
The Illinois Tollway is a user-fee system that receives no state or federal funds for maintenance and operations. The agency maintains and operates 286 miles of interstate tollways in 12 counties in Northern Illinois, including the Reagan Memorial Tollway (I-88), the Veterans Memorial Tollway (I-355), the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (I-90) and the Tri-State Tollway (I-94/I-294/I-80).

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